

Welcome to Fort Irwin! There are three offices here that provide services directly to service members and their dependents. They are: Legal Assistance, Trial Defense Services, and Claims. All of these offices are co-located in one Building, across the street from Center Chapel. At this time I would like to briefly describe these offices and the services they provide.

The Fort Irwin **Legal Assistance** Office provides free legal advice and services to service members, their dependents, and retirees. Their office hours are from 0830-1600 Mondays through Fridays, except for Thursdays, when the office closes at 1500. Powers of Attorney and Notary services are available everyday from 0800-1500 on a walk-in basis.

The attorneys at the Legal Assistance Office are able to provide free legal advice and services in many different areas. By appointment, legal assistance attorneys can advise you on family law, estate planning, debt collection, consumer rights,

service members rights under the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act, immigration, taxes, military administrative matters concerning OER and NCOER appeals, letters of reprimand, financial liability investigations and almost anything else not related to UCMJ proceedings. The legal assistance office at Fort Irwin is one of the few in the Army that provides direct assistance with filing for divorce, as long the case is uncontested – which means that everyone involved is able to agree on all the important issues. The legal assistance office should be your first stop after receiving phone calls or letters from debt collectors, or a summons to appear in a civilian court.

Trial Defense Services, otherwise known as “TDS,” has a very different mission. TDS represents clients facing criminal charges under the UCMJ. TDS attorneys do not work for any local commander, they work for Soldiers only. If you are accused of a crime, or are suspected of committing a crime, you

can talk to a TDS attorney before answering any questions or making any statements. Article 15 consultations are held Tuesdays and Wednesdays promptly at 0900. Consultations for individuals being separated, or “chaptered,” are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1300. If you are accused or suspected of a crime, you may speak with a TDS attorney on a walk-in basis, anytime during the duty day.

The last office I will address is **Claims**. If you are watching this video, you have probably just completed a PCS move. If any of your household goods are missing or damaged, you may be able to be reimbursed by filing a claim under the Full Replacement Value System.

When your household goods are delivered, the mover should provide you with a DD Form 1840 and 1840R. These pink forms are what you will use to document any damaged or missing items. Under the Full Replacement Value System, you

have **75 days to file this form with the mover.** When your property is delivered you have the opportunity to note any damaged or missing items on the 1840 form – the front side of the pink form. This puts the mover on notice of the damaged and missing items. When the mover leaves, you have **75 days** to unpack boxes and do a closer inspection of items and note any loss or damage on the reverse side of the pink form, which is called DD Form 1840R.

When filling out either the front or back sides of the DD Form 1840, **be sure to thoroughly inspect your items and write down a description of the damage.** If there is obvious physical damage, say so. It is better to be more specific and say, for example, “the stereo does not work and the front cover is broken, and there is a gouge on the player housing unit,” than to simply say “the stereo is broken.” You do not, however, need to get estimates of repair at this time. Make sure you hold onto

any damaged items. Do not get rid of them unless told to do so by the claims office or the mover.

Once you complete your forms, contact the mover to find out where to send them. The mover's contact information should be listed on the DD Form 1840R. If you are unable to contact the moving company or the moving company is not responsive, come to the claims office for help. It is incredibly important that you send your pink forms to the mover within 75 days. If you file late, then you will not be reimbursed. If the mover asks you to mail the forms to them, make sure you send them by **certified mail**.

Once you have provided the mover with a completed copy of the DD Form 1840R, you have nine months from the date of delivery to follow up with a written demand to the mover for a specific amount. **Do not miss this deadline.** This written demand is your claim. In it, you must list each item that was

lost or damaged and give a general description of the damage.

Estimates of repair are not needed to file your claim. Once you have met the nine month deadline for filing, additional information may be presented later. If the mover does not respond to your demand for payment, or if you are not satisfied with the mover's proposed payment you can come to the claims office for alternative filing information and help.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact the claims office. The claims office is open from 0800-1600 Mondays through Fridays.

Welcome to Fort Irwin, and please take advantage of the legal services that are available to you.

All three of the offices discussed here (legal assistance, claims, and TDS) are located in building 288

Their phone numbers are as follows:

Legal Assistance: 380-5321

TDS: 380-3282

Claims: (760) 380-3614

